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**Virginia's expected winter wheat production up 23 percent**

**RICHMOND, Va.** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released its May Crop Production report today based on the Agricultural Yield survey conducted at the beginning of month. The report includes information on Virginia's winter wheat forecast and on-farm hay stocks.

**Virginia** farmers expect to harvest 11.7 million bushels of **winter wheat** during 2018. The expected crop for 2018 would be 23 percent larger than the previous year. Farmers seeded 230,000 acres last fall with 175,000 acres to be harvested for grain. Based on crop conditions as of May 1, and assuming a normal growing season, farmers expect a yield of 67 bushels per acre, up one bushel from 2017. Acres for other uses totaled 55,000 acres and will be used as cover crop or cut as silage or hay.

"The Virginia winter wheat crop experienced below normal temperatures and varied precipitation in April," said Herman Ellison, Virginia state statistician. "As of April 29, 29 percent of the crop had headed and was mostly rated in good condition."

Winter wheat production for the **nation** is forecast at 1.19 billion bushels, down six percent from 2017. As of May 1, the United States yield is forecast at 48.1 bushels per acre, down 2.1 bushels from last year's average yield of 50.2 bushels per acre.

As of May 1, **Virginia** on-farm **hay stocks** totaled 250,000 tons, down 290,000 tons from May 1, 2017, stocks. Farmers have used 77 percent of their hay stocks since Dec. 1, 2017.

**U. S.** hay stocks were at 15.7 million tons, down 36 percent from 2017.

"I would like to thank all the farmers for taking time out of your busy schedules to respond the Agricultural Yield Survey," Ellison added. "The more farmers we have responding to our surveys, the more accurate data we can provide for the agricultural industry. I wish them a very prosperous and healthy year."